

Getting Your Feet Wet

an introduction to noaa's national ocean service

The National Ocean Service (NOS), an office within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, works to preserve and enhance the nation's coastal resources and ecosystems along 95,000 miles of shoreline and 3.5 million square miles of coastal ocean. NOS works to protect, restore and manage resources in our oceans and coasts; understand climate change and variability; fulfill weather and water information needs; and support commerce and transportation. NOS strives to be a global leader in integrated management of the ocean.

TO CONSERVE OUR OCEANS, NOS works to –



- Conserve the nation's coral reefs as part of a multi-agency effort
- Preserve marine resources and reverse losses by implementing the Marine Protected Areas Program
- Manage a network of national marine sanctuaries
- Explore the vast ocean depths
- Respond to, assess and remediate oil and chemical spills
- Facilitate international partnerships to fulfill common ocean-related goals

ALONG OUR COASTS, NOS works to –



- Identify how ecological processes and human activities inter-relate in coastal ecosystems
- Monitor and observe physical, chemical, biological and meteorological phenomena
- Evaluate and address contaminants, and monitor cleanup efforts
- Forecast ecological impacts of chemical, biological and physical changes on ecosystems and people
- Manage and conduct research and educational activities in 26 national estuarine research reserves
- Assess the effects of natural hazards such as hurricanes, tsunamis, erosion, harmful algal blooms and others
- Provide tools and information needed to restore damaged natural resources
- Train coastal managers to make good decisions about managing resources

FOR CHARTING AND NAVIGATION NEEDS, NOS works to –



- Provide accurate aerial photography and coastal survey maps to aid in coastal management and ensure safe navigation
- Coordinate 400 global positioning reference stations to ensure reliable transportation and communication systems
- Provide continuously updated nautical charts and hydrographic surveys to navigators and mariners
- Monitor and predict tides and currents, and provide real-time information through the Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System and National Water Level Observation Network



THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

RICHARD SPINRAD,
Assistant Administrator

JACK HAYES,
Deputy Assistant Administrator

OFFICE of RESPONSE and RESTORATION (OR&R)

David Kennedy, *Director*

CDR Ken Barton, *Deputy Director*

OR&R works to prevent and mitigate harm to coastal resources. It is the primary NOAA office that responds to oil spills and hazardous material releases. OR&R also works with federal, state, and tribal natural resource trustees to restore damaged coastal resources.

<http://response.restoration.noaa.gov>

OFFICE of COAST SURVEY (OCS)

CAPT Roger Parsons, *Director*

Katie Ries, *Deputy Director*

OCS is the nation's nautical chart maker. OCS collects, manages, and compiles the data and information necessary to maintain the national suite of 1,000 nautical charts, hydrographic surveys that measure water depth, and historic maps and charts.

<http://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov>

OFFICE of OCEAN and COASTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (OCRM)

Eldon Hout, *Director*

Doug Brown, *Deputy Director*

OCRM is responsible for implementing the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, which Congress passed to address the growing concerns about the health of the nation's coastal resources.

<http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov>

NOAA COASTAL SERVICES CENTER (CSC)

Margaret Davidson, *Director*

Jeff Payne, *Deputy Director*

CSC provides skills and information resources to state and local coastal resource managers. Its primary support initiatives involve those issues considered most important to managers — hazards, habitats, sustainable communities, and data and information access and usability.

<http://csc.noaa.gov>

OFFICE of NATIONAL GEODETIC SURVEY (NGS)

Charlie Challstrom, *Director*

Dave Zilkoski, *Deputy Director*

NGS develops and maintains a national system of positioning data needed for transportation, navigation, and communication systems, land record systems, mapping and charting efforts, and defense operations.

<http://geodesy.noaa.gov>

NATIONAL CENTERS for COASTAL OCEAN SCIENCE (NCCOS)

Gary Matlock, *Director*

Jean Snider, *Deputy Director*

NCCOS conducts and supports research, monitoring, assessment, and technical assistance for managing coastal ecosystems and society's use of them. These activities fit within a framework of five environmental stressors: climate change, extreme natural events, pollution, invasive species, and land and resource use.

<http://coastalscience.noaa.gov>

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES PROGRAM (NMSP)

Dan Basta, *Director*

Michael Weiss, *Deputy Director*

NSMP protects and manages 13 sanctuaries encompassing more than 18,000 square miles of U.S. ocean. Important habitats like breeding and feeding grounds, coral reefs, kelp forests, and historical shipwrecks are represented within the system of sanctuaries.

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

CENTER for OPERATIONAL OCEANOGRAPHIC PRODUCTS and SERVICES (CO-OPS)

Mike Szabados, *Director*

Rich Edwing, *Deputy Director*

CO-OPS collects and distributes oceanographic observations and predictions to ensure safe, efficient, and environmentally sound maritime commerce. The center provides water level and coastal current oceanographic products, measures and predicts tides throughout the nation, and is responsible for disseminating this information to the public.

<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov>

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICE (IPO)

Bud Ehler, *Director*

Clement Lewsey, *Deputy Director*

IPO's areas of expertise include integrated coastal management, marine protected area management, mitigation of climate change impacts, safe and environmentally sound maritime navigation, reduction of natural disaster impacts, and capacity building. IPO shares its capabilities with NOS programs and with the global coastal, marine, and resource community.

<http://international.nos.noaa.gov>

NOS MANAGEMENT and BUDGET OFFICE (MBO)

Mitchell Luxenberg,
Chief Financial Officers, acting

MBO is the focal point for all planning, management, budget, internal and external communication, and education activities.